

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4487

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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BANGKOK PASS SONGKHLA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MY, TH

SUBJECT: GOM-THAI FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET--BRIEFLY

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 4296

1. UNOFFICIAL MEETING BETWEEN THAT FOREIGN MINISTER PICHAI RATAKUL AND FOREIGN MINISTER TENGKU RITHAUDDEEN OF MALAYSIA AT KOTA BARU, KELANTAN, SEPTEMBER 4 CAME AS SURPRISE AS IT HAD NOT BEEN ANNOUNCED HERE BEFOREHAND. ACCORDING TO BERNAMA, THE STATE NEWS AGENCY, RITHAUDDEEN MET WITH PICHAI FOR THE EVENING SO THAT HE COULD BRIEF THE THAT FONMIN AND UNDER SECRETARY ANAND ON THE COLOMBO NAC SUMMIT AND SO THEY COULD DISCUSS UPCOMING UNGA SESSION. PICHAI TOLD BERNAMA THAT THE SITUATION IN THE BETONG SALIENT OF THAILAND WAS "UNDERCONTROL", NOTING THAT MORE BORDER POLICE PATROLS HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED. HE ALSO REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THAI-MALAYSIAN COOPERATION IN SOLVING PROBLEMS ALONG THE THAI-KELANTAN BORDER. THE THAI CONSUL IN KOTA BARU WAS LISTED AS PRESENT FOR THE MEETING WHICH ALSO INCLUDED

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THE CHIEF MINISTER OF KELANTAN AND THE CHIEF POLICE

OFFICER FOR THE STATE. PICHAI REPORTEDLY ORIGINALLY
PLANNED TO RETURN TO SUNGEI GOLOK IN THAILAND THAT EVENING BUT
ENDED UP SPENDING THE NIGHT IN KOTA BARU AND TRAVELING ON TO
PATANI SEPTEMBER 5.

2. COMMENT. ACCORDING TO PRESS SOURCES, CAPITAL PRESSMEN
WERE NOT INFORMED OF THIS MEETING AND THEREFORE COVERAGE
WAS LIMIED TO BERNAMA. ONE NEWSMAN SPECULATED THAT THIS
WAS TO AVOID QUESTIONS ABOUT THE REVISED PROPOSALS ON CROSS
BORDER SECURITY OPERATIONS ALLEGEDLY PROMISED BY THE GOM
AT THE JULY 24-25 MEETING BETWEEN THE THAI AND MALAYSIAN
PRIME MINISTERS. GIVEN THE LOCALE, HOWEVER, WE WOULD GUESS
THAT TALKS ALSO RELATED TO THE PROBLEM OF KELANTANESE
SUPPORT FOR MUSLIM SEPARATISTS AND BANDITS IN SOUTH THAILAND,
A KEY ISSUE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.
UNDERHILL

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